

thorough. Of course, I cannot speak of the present management, for I would rather not give an opinion. I think the rules are unusually strict with regard to the Nurses, but many of these very rules have been brought about by the fault of the Nurses themselves, who took advantage of the liberty allowed, so the rules were made which they find so irksome. It is very difficult to keep up the discipline in a large Hospital. You see there are two ways of doing a thing. A Nurse should always adopt the proper way, and not take the law into her own hands. For instance, if she be too tired to comply with any given order, she should make her statement known to the Matron or Sister-in-Charge, and thus receive official leave, instead of doing as many do—taking French leave. She then, however right her case may be, puts herself in the wrong at once. Many of the Nurses cause a great deal of unnecessary friction thus, which necessitates strict rules, through which all have to suffer.”

“How many patients have you here?”

“We can take 42, but we are very empty just now. They are chiefly men; we receive a few children, and occasionally a woman. I have seven Nurses and two Probationers, three are Night Nurses. Our cases are all accidents, smashes, broken arms and legs, smashed fingers and bad fractures of all sorts which occur at the docks. The women who come in are chiefly those who have tried to commit suicide. We have two resident medical officers, and three doctors for the out-patients. Most of our patients are socialists, they need very careful handling and require management. ‘Jack is as good as his master,’ is their idea, but we have very little trouble in getting them to obey the rules. The friends give us the most trouble by bringing in spirits and food to the wards. Our chaplain is blind, and partly owing to this the men take to him very much. This is a very low district indeed. Beyond the doctors and the clergy there is no so-called middle class. Yes, I do find it dull, there is no where to walk when we get off duty; so long as I am at work I do not feel it.”

“I am glad to say this old building is to be pulled down; the new one, which they promise shall be ready in June, will be very much larger; it adjoins this, and you can go over it. We are so terribly cramped for room here, and the sanitary arrangements are so defective, which is a sad drawback in surgical cases.”

“Do you have a great many deaths here?”

“In proportion, the death rate is high. You see, the men are often not in a state to stand the operations, which are chiefly amputations and

trepanning. They drink so dreadfully; a great enemy here is delirium tremens; a case now in the wards had delirium tremens when he came in first; for three days and nights he was simply a mad-man.”

“Are you not obliged to get in male nurses for these cases?”

“Oh no, our own staff nurse them; but the accommodation is so small that when we have a delirium tremens case which has necessarily to be isolated, the Nurses have to give up their own sitting room for the purpose. We are not going to any expense at present that we can help, as we wish to save all we can for the new building. We have the funds for that, but nothing as yet for the furnishing. Baron Hirsch sent us £800 this year from his turf winnings. Poplar Hospital is entirely supported by voluntary contributions, and I am anxious to make this known.”

“Will you have to close the Hospital at all when you move from this building?”

“I expect we shall close for a short time, but nothing is decided. I shall be very busy, as I shall have to see to all the furnishing of the new Hospital. Would you like to go over the Hospital? You must make allowances for all its defects.”

In the first ward I entered, there were several men in bed, nearly all suffering from broken limbs, or severe head injuries. The rooms were spotlessly clean; in the middle of each room was a table with a white tiled slab on which were neatly arranged all the various disinfectants, etc. Over each bed, hung the diet and temperature charts, a bright fire looked delightfully cheery, and the spring flowers, tastefully arranged, were in profusion. Some of the men were well enough to be up and dressed, others were able to read although in bed; the *Daily Graphic* and *Strand Magazine* were the chief favourites with the patients. Magazines are much appreciated as they are easy to hold in a recumbent position. If any readers of the *Nursing Record* have old papers or magazines to give away, they should remember the Poplar and other Hospitals.

The women and children’s ward was unoccupied, but a couple of little lads were in the men’s convalescent ward. One poor little fellow of about five showed me his finger which had been badly squeezed in his mother’s mangle; the finger getting mangled instead of the article. The poor man who had suffered from delirium tremens was on the high road to recovery, his broken leg was placed in a swing cradle, which I heard was invented by Mr. Bloxam, the well known surgeon, and bears his name. It gave him every ease, and prevented any risk of bed-

---

The “NURSING RECORD” has a Larger Sale than any other Journal devoted solely to Nursing Work.

---

The “NURSING RECORD” has a Larger Sale than any other Journal devoted solely to Nursing Work.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)